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NDDOT brings safe driving presentation to Ellendale Public School

The North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT), in cooperation with Ellendale Public School, sponsored a safe driving presentation featuring national speaker, Tyler Presnell of Washington state. At the age of 14, Presnell was involved in a car crash that has left him with a permanent brain injury that affected his short-term memory. Presnell, who shared his story at Ellendale Public School Thursday, October 25, travels the country speaking to students about the importance of traffic safety and making positive choices involving motor vehicles.

In North Dakota, teen drivers account for fewer than 7 percent of all licensed drivers, but are involved in more than 20 percent of all motor vehicle crashes and nearly 15 percent of all motor vehicle fatalities.

“Safety is a top priority at the NDDOT,” said Mark Nelson, NDDOT Safety Division Director. “The ‘Think About It’ initiative encourages peer education to get teens to make smart decisions when it comes to getting in a motor vehicle as a driver as well as a passenger.”

The NDDOT has provided resources to develop a new safety program centered on teens, called “Think About It.” The “Think About It” slogan and associated activity was developed by a youth committee consisting of four students from Bismarck High School and Century High School. The committee decided on the “Think About It” slogan to urge teens to think about their actions rather than simply telling them what, or what not, to do. The goal of the initiative is to decrease the number of crashes and fatalities involving teens on North Dakota roadways.

“Motor vehicle crashes are the leading preventable cause of death among 15 to 19 year olds in North Dakota,” said Ellendale Public School counselor Jane Reisenauer. “This is why it was important to bring this traffic safety presentation here today – to protect the future of our students.”

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